JOU4201 (18950): WRUF-ESPN 3 Experience

Spring 2026

College of Journalism and Communications
University of Florida

Instructors: Shemar Woods
Director of Sports Journalism & Communication: Eric Esterline
Place: FLG 0220
Day and Time: Fridays, Period 4 (10:40 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

E-Mail: shemar.woods@ufl.edu, eesterline@jou.ufl.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays (10a-11a), Wednesdays (10a-11a)

PREREQUISITES:
In order to qualify for JOU 4201, students must seek approval to join the course through the instructor.

Overview and Objectives
JOU4201 is designed to offer training in sports news gathering, writing, interviewing and reporting. Special emphasis is placed on improving writing skills, basic news production, and actual multimedia reporting assignments. Students receive practical experience in the field.

Course Learning Objectives
Objectives and goals of the experience include:

(1) writing sports stories acceptable for on-air and station website use under deadline pressure

(2) ability to record audio via phone or in-person, and edit audio

(3) ability to write "sound stories"

(4) an understanding of the variety of sources used

(5) an opportunity, and an expectation that work produced in the newsroom can and will be used on the air and web

(6) a better understanding of sports news and current events and how to engage audience via social media

(7) an understanding of websites for research, as well as to produce content for station website

(8) ability to produce multimedia web projects and audio story projects for the WRUF website

Experience Grades

The following table outlines the point-accruing components of the course. The total points earned from each component will be summed and divided by the total points possible in the course.

Evaluation Components	Points Per Component	% of Total Grade
Meeting/Game/Event Attendance (10 events attended)	5 pts each - 50 pts	50%
Content and Quality of Content Produced (10 pieces of content minumum)	5 pts each - 50 pts	50%
Total	**100 pts**	**100%**

Assignment Descriptions

MEETING & EVENT ATTENDANCE (50 POINTS)

You will be assigned a Gator or other beat to cover during the semester with your reporting team. You are required to attend and cover the team OR regularly create content around your beat. You should utilize the ESPN Gainesville content calendar to plan and track the events you will be covering with your reporting team. Students will also be asked to have regular meetings with the editor(s) of WRUF to discuss their beat coverage, pitch stories and discuss coverage with the group in general.

CONTENT PRODUCED (50 POINTS)

You are required to produce content during the semester. This can be a variety of content that includes game previews, recaps, features, live-tweeting, etc. You can work with your reporting team together on these pieces, but you must play a role in creating the content to get credit for it. You should track your content on the ESPN Gainesville content calendar.

Grading (grades are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number for grading purposes)

93.5-100	= A	89.5-93.4	= A-				
86.5-89.4	= B+	82.5-86.4	= B	79.5-82.4	= B-		
76.5-79.4	= C+	72.5-76.4	= C	69.5-72.4	= C-		
66.5-69.4	= D+	62.5-66.4	= D	59.5-62.4	= D-		
0-59.4	= F						

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students are assigned one shift per week and must attend each week unless the student has a university-approved absence. If a student is missing a shift because of an illness, the student **MUST** provide a doctor's note for the absence to be excused. Any unexcused absence can result in the student being dismissed from the experience and failing the experience.

Plagiarism and Citing Sources

Plagiarism includes using someone else's words, sources, or stories—whether published, broadcast, or online—without proper attribution or when such material dominates your own work. Misrepresenting your presence at an event, inventing sources, or submitting work that was not entirely your own are all forms of academic and journalistic dishonesty. Reusing assignments across classes without permission or submitting edited or graded work from one course to another, also violates academic integrity. Using copyrighted material like images, music, or videos without permission or credit constitutes a copyright violation and is considered plagiarism. Ultimately, honesty, originality, and transparency are essential in all aspects of journalistic and academic work.

Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI)

Students are prohibited from using AI tools to generate, write or substantially edit social posts. Posts must be your original work. Using AI to generate content is considered plagiarism and subject to the university's academic integrity policies. Students may use AI tools for idea brainstorming, research or to verify facts and data. If using AI to brainstorm, you must confirm the accuracy of names, places, organizations, events and other facts before pitching it.
If in doubt about any use of AI for coursework, please consult your instructor.

The Consequences

All acts of suspected plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be reported to the INC Director and /or journalism chair, and the Dean of the CJC, and may be referred to the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution Center.

An act of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in failure on the assignment, failure of the class, as well as other possible sanctions outlined in the Faculty Senate Policy on Academic Misconduct.

Academic Integrity

UF students are bound by the Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. For more information visit the Honor Code web page at

http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/ or contact Student Judicial Affairs, P202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261.

Sponsored Content

Marketers and publishers are using innovative methods to create, format, and deliver digital advertising. One form is "native advertising," or "sponsored content," which is content that bears a similarity to news, feature articles, product reviews, entertainment, and other material that surrounds it online. Sometimes, different outside entities will offer reporters, broadcasters and authors monetary compensation for including this sponsored content or native advertising in their reporting.

ESPN Gainesville and the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications and the Department of Media Properties **are NOT in this business**.

If you, as a student, are ever approached via email, text, phone call, direct message, etc. by an outside entity about linking to or providing information to our audience in a manner that is described above or something similar, you should not engage with this outside entity or cooperate with them. Please refer them to a manager, director, or instructor when/if this happens.

If any willful violation of this policy occurs with any content a student is producing for the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications and the Department of Media Properties, you **WILL** be removed from the immersion experience, course, or program, **you will fail the experience and/or course** and other consequences could result.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter that must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this process as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on a minimum of 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last three weeks of the semester, but announcements will be made giving specific times when they are open. Summary results of these evaluations are available to students at the evaluation website URL above.

Course Grading

Students will be graded in accordance with UF policies for assigning grade points as articulated in the link that follows. https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

U Matter, We Care

Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in

distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.